

## **Toox: Backstory**

### **Changeling - Monk - Criminal**

Toox story begins in an orphanage. She didn't know who her parents were or how she got to this place and there was no one left to answer that question. What she was told was to keep quiet and stop the strange nonsense that made the caregivers shiver. It didn't take long and soon they called her demon, child of evil and an abnormality. She was forbidden to take on other forms. But since the ladies of the house could not bear her natural, pallid figure, she established the shape of a redheaded girl (knobbly nose, brown eyes). She used her abilities, however, to steal food or do mischief from time to time. (Which, of course, caused other children trouble instead of her.) If she was caught, she was doubly punished with deprivation of food, beating or arrest.

Finally, she used her skills to run away at the age of 7. The ladies didn't make much of an effort to stop her and in the end she just had to turn around the next corner to disappear in the crowd. Toox lived on the street and survived by the help of her special ability. She stole and hid. But life without a roof above the head was hard and relentless. (about 2 years)

She liked to steal in taverns, at festivals, executions or other events where there was a large, distracted crowd. One day a troupe of musicians and showmen – called the blaze of tunes – marched through the city. Of course, she also used the opportunity here. The artists discovered her, because the audience's pockets had already been emptied when they tried to steal from them. With a little effort they grabbed her and offered her (friendly, though a little rough) to travel with them and do her little magic tricks for them instead. While they had their own skillful fingers, no one could disappear into the crowd as Toox did when difficulties arose.

The prospect of living without rules, but with a little more security, seemed enough to give up her miserable life and join the group.

#### Troop Blaze of Tunes:

[f] Half-orc musician: Slog (leader of the group, many tattoos of fish, long dark hair in braid, purple clothes) -> harp

[f] Human actress, teenager: Peeta (dirty blonde curls, dark linen clothes, smoking herbs all the time) -> writes song lyrics

[m] Halfling musician: Kilvin (bald head, pierced ears, missing canine, dirty silk clothes) -> flute

[m] Half-Elf Musician: Simsinas (long smooth white hair with plaits, dark green robe, many rings) -> Lute

[f] Dwarf actress: Braga (short rust-brown hair, golden incisors, three-day beard, dark leather costume, likes dirty jokes) -> singing

So she traveled with them all over the country. They were a merry group with whom she grew together quickly. Since she had no real experience with other people – apart from her orphanage friends – she soon gave them heart and soul. Toox continued to steal at their events and helped them to greater prosperity, in which she could participate generously. Over time she even learned acting skills from them. One day the leader Slog gave her a little flute and although Toox was quite unmusical, she has been playing it enthusiastically ever since. The musicians & actors were her first real family. Toox skills became better as she stole and cheated under their guidance. They never forbade her to change form, but rather found it amusing. When they realized what she could do, they went over to bigger crimes. They let Toox get into houses and shops, obtained documents and goods by pretending to be other important people the gang had spied on before.

For a long time this went well, but the situations became more and more risky. She relied on her family to protect her and on their experience. More and more powerful people became aware of

them and searched for the perpetrator of the many crimes. A mistake was only a matter of time, but they had got used to the new lifestyle and relied on their cunning. The next house was too strong and magically secured. All were captured. Their leader was hanged before everyone's eyes and Toox ended up in prison with the rest. They disappeared one by one from their cells. She never saw them again.

She sat there for about three miserable months until she was unexpectedly taken out of her cell by a monastery. They demanded absolute obedience and gave her, in their own words, "*a new and last chance*". The monastery was a secret organization that freed criminals with special abilities from prisons and thus claimed their free will. They trained assassins, spys and thieves who could be rent by rich and powerful people for their private purposes. They had heard of Toox's deeds and abilities. With no alternative, Toox followed the new instructions and saw the monks as the saviors who had taken her out of prison. They trained her for three years and only let her take small missions to test her. They were strict but promoted her existing skills and taught her how to fight. However, she still struggled with killing. Her personal trainer was the Half-Elf Dooran (dark complexion, shaved sides, grey plait, steel eyes, sinewy). He took her under his wing and cared for her well-being.

Her first mission was therefore decided in a political matter. The young lady Adaline, daughter of a powerful man, had been promised to another powerful young man as wife. Long before her birth. But his father was looking for a reason not to keep his promise. For two years men and women had been trying to charm Adaline and bring her to misbehavior. So Toox was finally set as the last resort. She began to sneak around the estate of Adaline's family to gather information. She listened at closed doors and sometimes pretended to be a maid (broad build, dull brown hair, brown eyes, chubby cheeks) to find out what the young lady found attractive (blond curls, blue eyes). Finally Toox began to create a human form (Ulgan Montgomery DeClare, dark hair with soft waves, soft grey eyes, always a light smile around his lips, gentleman with a noble background, mischievous humor, romantic, self-confident, adventurous).

As if by chance, Toox met the girl in Ulgan's form and there seemed to be an immediate attraction between them. The portrayal of the perfect man for a young woman was fruitful. But Toox got herself in big trouble. She began to develop feelings. She knew that this was wrong and stupid in every way and Adaline didn't like her, but the character created especially for her.

After a few months they kissed for the first time. It was like a little firework in Toox's chest and she could almost forget everything. Although she was watched 24 hours a day, she never saw anyone and since she had no romantic experience, she was completely overwhelmed. So it went on. A kiss was not enough for the monks, and they set Toox on the final step of seduction. Everything was prepared. She knew it wasn't right. But she longed so much for closeness. She thought about fleeing, but without Adaline she couldn't leave and she knew that the girl would never love her for her true form. Besides, she had no money, no contacts and could only disappear on her own in the presence of the numerous chasers that would follow this action.

So they finally sat at a picnic on a flowering meadow in the sunshine. It was like a dream. And Toox let herself be carried away. Clung to the hope that somehow everything would be all right. Or at least not so bad. The monks waited until the girl was exposed and the scenery could hardly be more obvious (Toox had only known half of the plan anyway and had successfully suppressed the precarious state of this situation). At this point the fiancé appeared by chance on his horse with two companions. Adaline screamed and tried to cover herself. Tears ran down her cheeks while her fiancé played his rehearsed scene of injured outrage. The girl tried to explain something she couldn't understand and turned to her lover for help. But Toox felt as if someone had poured ice water into her veins. She couldn't move, completely frozen, and felt a thick lump in her throat that

was taking her breath away. Monks appeared out of nowhere, disguised as guards, and took Toox with them. As if stunned, she let herself be led away when dull pain began to spread inside her. From then on she was hardly usable anymore. She had received reward, recognition and the symbol of the monastery (a branding on her left shoulder blade in the form of a stylized scorpion), which distinguished her as a full member. But inside she felt empty, her body numb. Couldn't eat or sleep. When the grief became too bad, she turned into Adaline and stared into the mirror for hours. Touched her long, blond curls, pale skin, rosy lips. Finally she dared to ask about the girl, but received no information.

At first she was not bothered with new orders and was kept in the monastery. Eventually she should at least train again and one evening she took the opportunity to get out and make inquiries in the nearby town. Perhaps she could return to her love and escape with her? She learned that the girl had tried to kill herself overwhelmed with shame and grief. Toox was shaken and did not return that night. She walked all the way to the girl's estate (4 days). When she got there, she was completely covered in dirt and her clothes were torn. No one was allowed to see Adaline and certainly not someone like her. After five more days the monks found her and brought her back. Her trainer, Dooran, visited her. She had heard him arguing with other monks in the hallway. It seemed as if he had wanted to stop the situation. He tried to talk to her about everything, but she was just sitting on her cot. The next day she got a new trainer, Ronan (human, stocky, black hair). From now on she remained under strict surveillance. For a year and a half she stayed sitting in her room like a shadow of herself. It took a while for her to start eating again or move around at all. Since her mission had been so successful, the monks gave her time. She was soothed and finally taken back into training. Her ghostly nature was dismissed as an internal mistake, to have taken her too early for such a task. Toox wanted to believe them. For months she was hardly usable for anything, but with time it slowly got better. After all, the exercise did her good. Nevertheless, it only took another half a year until she was introduced to a new mission. She was to meet a young nobleman who liked to cheat and should be caught red-handed by his wife.

But this time she struggled. Which fell on deaf ears. That same night she fled head over heels. The monks followed her, but all the skills they had taught her helped Toox to lose them. For days she strolled through villages and wilderness without really noticing where she was and without a thought of hope. Eventually she decided to take on some assignment that at least gave her some money.